WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1   1. A method of searching unstructured data stored in a database, the
2 method comprising:
3   storing unstructured data in a column of a database table;
4   allowing a user to identify elements in the unstructured data as indexed
5 elements;
6   creating an intermediate index into the unstructured data from the
7 identified elements; and
8   allowing a user to create queries on the unstructured data using the
9 indexed elements.

1   2. The method of claim 1 wherein the queries specify at least one
2 value and an operation that is to be performed on an identified element.

1   3. The method of claim 2 wherein the queries further include a start
2 date and an end date.

1   4. The method of claim 1 wherein the unstructured data is stored in
2 character large object (CLOB) format.

1   5. The method of claim 4 wherein the unstructured data comprises a
2 well-formed XML document stored within a column of a database table.

1   6. The method of claim 5 wherein XML fields of the unstructured
2 data are filled with transaction data from a database transaction based on a predefined
3 mapping to multiple data sources.

1   7. The method of claim 6 wherein the multiple data sources are
2 comprise multiple tables of a database.

1   8. The method of claim 1 wherein the unstructured data is part of an
2 electronic record stored in a common repository of electronic records that provides an
3 audit trail that cannot be altered or disabled by users of the system.

1   9. A method of searching XML data stored in a column of a
2 database table in character large object (CLOB) format, the method comprising:

Oracle Ref. No.: OID-2003-067-01

3   storing the XML data in the column of the database table, wherein the

4   XML data comprises a first plurality of XML elements that conform to a first data type

5   definition (DTD) and a second plurality of XML elements that conform to a second

6   DTD;

7   allowing a user to identify elements from the first and second plurality

8   of XML elements in XML data as indexed elements;

9   creating an intermediate index into the XML data from the identified

10 elements; and

11   allowing a user to create queries on the unstructured data using the

12 indexed elements.

1   10.   The method of claim 9 wherein the first and second DTDs

2   include first and second XML elements, respectively, that share a common name but

3   represent different types of data and wherein the user can create a first indexed element

4   that represents the first XML element and not the second XML element and a second

5   indexed element that represents the second XML element and not the first XML

6   element.

1   11.   A computer system for searching unstructured data stored in a

2   database, the computer system comprising:

3   a processor;

4   a database; and

5   a computer-readable memory coupled to the processor, the computer-

6   readable memory configured to store a computer program;

7   wherein the processor is operative with the computer program to:

8   (i)   store unstructured data in a column of a database table;

9   (ii)   allow a user to identify elements in the unstructured data

10   as indexed elements;

11   (iii) create an intermediate index into the unstructured data

12   from the identified elements; and

13   (iv)   allow a user to create queries on the unstructured data

14   using the indexed elements.

1   12.   The computer system of claim 11 wherein the queries specify at

2   least one value and an operation that is to be performed on an identified element.

1   13.   The computer system of claim 11 wherein the unstructured data

2 is stored in character large object (CLOB) format.

1   14.   The computer system of claim 163 wherein the unstructured data

2 comprises well-formed XML documents stored within a column of a table stored in the

3 database.

4   15.   The computer system of claim 14 wherein fields of the

5 unstructured data are filled with transaction data from a database transaction based on a

6 predefined mapping to multiple data sources.

1   16.   A computer program stored on a computer-readable storage

2 medium for searching unstructured data stored in a database, the computer program

3 comprising:

4   storing unstructured data in a column of a database table;

5   allowing a user to identify elements in the unstructured data as indexed

6 elements;

7   creating an intermediate index into the unstructured data from the

8 identified elements; and

9   allowing a user to create queries on the unstructured data using the

10 indexed elements.

1   17.   The computer program of claim 16 wherein the queries specify at

2 least one value and an operation that is to be performed on an identified element.

1   18.   The computer program of claim 16 wherein the unstructured data

2 is stored in character large object (CLOB) format.

1   19.   The computer program of claim 16 wherein the unstructured data

2 comprises well-formed XML documents stored within a column of a table stored in the

3 database.

1   20.   The computer program of claim 14 wherein fields of the

2 unstructured data are filled with transaction data from a database transaction based on a

3 predefined mapping to multiple data sources.

35

Oracle Ref. No.: OID-2003-067-01